



Crossroads of the American Revolution

Surround yourself with the splendor of the forests where patriots met. Walk the fields of their winter encampments. Visit the battlefields where our freedom was won. Experience the land and historic places as they once did.

Share your vision for the future - and how New Jersey's important stories can be told.

You can almost hear them.

Amidst the fertile fields and forests of New Jersey, patriots walked, lived, and fought. Through the New Jersey landscape they carried messages from Philadelphia to New York. Patriot soldiers hid in the natural protection offered by the hills, foraged for food on local farms, and traveled New Jersey's many waterways and byways.

While soldiers braved harsh winters with insufficient food, clothing and shelter, New Jersey farmers provided them with food, wood, and refuge. Many New Jersey families struggled with divided loyalties and bitter disputes. The most vital areas of New Jersey were rebel territory and an important part of the war effort.

Then, the area was mostly pristine wilderness with farms and towns scattered throughout. Surprisingly, much of the original landscape and structures remain. Today, development has masked, but not yet erased, the images of colonial days.

You can still walk in patriots' footsteps over the trails and byways that are part of our communities, parks, and preserved lands. But will future generations have the same opportunities?

That decision rests with the citizens of New Jersey.



Preserving a landscape of patriotic proportion

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The Secretary of the Interior has been directed by Congress to conduct a Special Resource Study and Feasibility Study to determine eligibility and the level of public support for designation of an as yet undetermined portion of central New Jersey as a National Heritage Area. Members of the New Jersey Congressional delegation were instrumental in this congressional action.

The study partnership includes the Delaware & Raritan Greenway, a regional non-profit organization, NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Parks and Forestry and Office of Green Acres, the New Jersey Department of State, and the National Park Service. Generous support provided by: Commonwealth of New Jersey, Fund for New Jersey, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and The Washington Association.



New Jersey's landscapes. A vital link to our past.

We invite you to join us.

The citizens of New Jersey and interested local governments and organizations are asked for their participation in these important studies. By attending public meetings in the coming months, you can provide us with the valuable input, information, and show of support that will help us determine our potential for designation as a National Heritage Area.

Our Heritage

Because of its strategic location between Philadelphia and New York, with the Delaware River to the west and access to New England by way of the Hudson River, New Jersey played a pivotal role in our country's fight for independence. General George Washington and the Continental Army spent almost half of the war in New Jersey, and our state was the site of more battles and skirmishes than any other state in the union.

New Jersey's terrain provided cover for Washington's army, and military engagements here kept British forces in New York from linking with those in Philadelphia and northern and southern regions. New Jersey provided safe harbors and plentiful iron ore to support the effort.

New Jersey's citizens directly experienced the impact of war. Allegiances were divided and often split families and communities; African Americans, free and slave, fought on both sides; and farmers' crops provided vital food to foraging troops. During these difficult times, lifelong friendships ended because one chose the path of rebellion and the other loyalty to the Crown. The conflict affected the daily life of everyone in New Jersey.



What is a National Heritage Area?

A National Heritage Area is a part of our country's landscape that has been recognized by the United States Congress for its unique contribution to the American experience. It is a "living landscape" where residents, businesses, and organizations have formed partnerships with local, state and federal governments to celebrate their heritage and conserve and restore irreplaceable natural and cultural resources.

Often, heritage areas result in preservation of natural and historic resources, heritage tourism and compatible economic benefits, and enhanced educational opportunities.



The protection and interpretation of resources is accomplished by a locally representative management entity working hand-in-hand with volunteers, non-profit organizations and local communities. The federal government provides limited funding and technical assistance but the decision-making is local and voluntary. Heritage areas use a small federal investment to leverage other available financial resources.

Criteria for designation as a National Heritage Area

The unique historic landscapes and resources identified in central New Jersey for the Crossroads of the American Revolution will be evaluated based on National Heritage Area criteria which follow:

The area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed as such an assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities

Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story

Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic features

Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities

The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation

Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments within the proposed area are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government, and have demonstrated support for designation of the area

The proposed management entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area

The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area

A conceptual boundary map is supported by the public

The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described

Together, the National Park Service and its partners are examining the assemblage of historic resources that still exists in the region today to determine if the story of New Jersey's critical role in the American Revolution 225 years ago can still be told to visitors and residents alike.

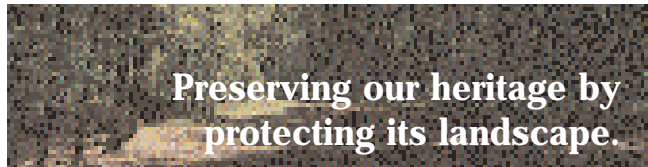
Of particular importance, we must assess the desire of New Jersey's citizens to seek National Heritage Area designation.

So we need your help.

What can you do?

Every interested citizen is encouraged to participate in the discussions that may shape our region by providing information and comments on your own vision for the future of the Crossroads of the American Revolution.

Beginning in mid-April 2001, the National Park Service will be holding public scoping meetings to inform the public of the Crossroads study. A second series of public meetings will take place in Summer 2001 to present findings and seek comments on draft recommendations. Public comments and information gathered at these meetings will further the development of study recommendations.



Potential partners and interested parties for these meetings include:

interested citizens	municipal officials
private organizations	county freeholders
civic groups	school districts
cultural institutions	tourist commissions
historic commissions	chambers of commerce
museums	land trusts

***Help us define a vision for the future,
and gain your community's involvement in the study.***

Keeping in touch with us

We encourage you to contact us with questions, additional comments, or if you have information to share that you believe is important to our understanding of the Crossroads of the American Revolution.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people
so that all may experience our heritage.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA.